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SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION: CLINTON'S DELHI VISIT

¶1. Gopal Khanal, senior reporter of Nepal's popular vernacular daily 'Kantipur' in an opinion piece on Friday, July 24, 2009 analyzed Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's India visit and predicted that Nepal would have to delicately deal with its two neighboring nations - China and India - in a changed context. Writing in the largest selling Kantipur with an estimated 150,000 circulation, Khanal suggested that Nepal hone its diplomatic skills, now that China and India both are emerging as nuclear superpowers, with different global and regional alliances.

¶2. Translated excerpts: "Just at the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton wrapped up her visit and left for Thailand, a serious debate began in New Delhi: does the Washington-Delhi special security relationship interfere with India's national security or not? The debate was rekindled with Hillary's visit. The new 'Inter User Monitoring Agreement', a part of the nuclear treaty, gives America access to India's nuclear strength. Analysts say that America will have the ability to monitor India's use of defense and nuclear paraphernalia. BJP, leftists and other opposition parties have indicated that the American monitoring of Indian defense capabilities would violate India's security and sovereignty whereas Congress (I) and other ruling parties have stated that the treaty would not only make India a nuclear power but also elevate India's position to on par with the United States."

¶3. "...The agreement between the Obama and Manmohan governments has now taken the two nations one step ahead and made them close security partners. With this India-America alliance, India is not just emerging as a strong regional force but also paving the way for greater political polarization, globally and regionally. The agreement will definitely have a lasting impact in the relations between the two democracies. America is happy with the agreement because it has got a new buyer for its military equipment, just like Pakistan and Egypt. The reason America cannot put pressure on Pakistan to fight terrorism as much as India would like is because Pakistan is a routine buyer of its weaponry. ..."

¶4. "...India did not receive the expected support from America in one issue during Hillary's visit: feeble American pressure on Pakistan to fight terrorism. India's expectation that America would put immense pressure on Pakistan was not met. Hillary commented that Pakistan was honestly and

seriously trying to end terrorism, much to India's dismay."

¶5. "India believes that Asif Ali Zardari is using terrorism strategically against India. America has never concurred with this Indian viewpoint. However, Hillary stayed at The Taj in Mumbai which was attacked by terrorists in November last year. This conveyed a message that India and America are ready to fight terrorism together. ...This India-America alliance will further polarize Asia and South Asia and Nepal will become a more important strategic point for the two alliances - India-America and China-Pakistan. Nepal, in transition itself, will again come under the force of superpowers and regional powers. In other words, issues such as Tibet and the Dalai Lama will take on a new dimension and Nepal needs to enhance its diplomatic balancing ability."

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